

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-8 (Cancelled).

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A method for measuring a total amount of adiponectin present in a sample, comprising:

adding an acid or a salt thereof to the sample, ~~the acid or salt~~ to obtain a solution having a pH of 4 or less;

allowing the acid or salt to react with the sample without boiling the combined sample and acid or salt; and

subsequently performing an immunological assay of the sample for adiponectin;

wherein the sample is an adiponectin multimer-containing sample.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The method ~~according to~~ of claim 9, wherein performing the immunological assay is performed by making use of comprises employing an insoluble carrier on which an anti-adiponectin antibody is ~~put~~ supported.

Claims 11-15 (Cancelled).

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The method of claim 9, wherein a surfactant is added to the sample along with the acid or salt.

Claim 17 (Cancelled).

Claim 18 (New): The method of claim 16, wherein the surfactant comprises an ionic surfactant.

Claim 19 (New): The method of claim 16, wherein the surfactant comprises a nonionic surfactant.

Claim 20 (New): The method of claim 16, wherein the surfactant comprises at least one alkyl sulfate.

Claim 21 (New): The method of claim 16, wherein the surfactant comprises at least one alkylbenzene sulfonate.

Claim 22 (New): The method of claim 16, wherein the surfactant is employed at a concentration of from 0.01 to 10%.

Claim 23 (New): The method of claim 9, wherein the acid comprises an organic acid.

Claim 24 (New): The method of claim 9, wherein the acid comprises an inorganic acid.

Claim 25 (New): The method of claim 9, wherein the acid comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of acetic acid, citric acid, hydrochloric acid, formic acid, tartaric acid and oxalic acid.

Claim 26 (New): The method of claim 9, wherein allowing the acid or salt to react with the sample comprises allowing the acid or salt to react with the sample at a temperature of from 4 to 60°C for a period of from 5 minutes to 24 hours.

Claim 27 (New): The method of claim 9, wherein the immunoassay comprises an immunoassay selected from the group consisting of latex turbidimetric immunoassays, enzyme immunoassays, chemiluminescent enzyme immunoassays and radioimmunoassays.

Claim 28 (New): The method of claim 10, wherein the insoluble carrier comprises polystyrene latex particles or a 96-well microplate made of styrene.